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ABSTRACT

Concerned with organizational approaches to student behavior, this paper first describes the key elements of organizational structure and leadership. These include articulation of organizational goals, such as ensuring an orderly environment conducive to learning and cultivating responsible student behavior and good character. The school's control mechanisms (evaluation, supervision, rewards, sanctions, and coordination) help facilitate achievement of school goals. Four additional elements (complexity, centralization, formalization, and stratification) are linked to organizational outcomes, along with constructs such as organizational culture and school climate. Three school-based strategies are categorized according to direct and indirect effects on student behavior and influence on teacher effectiveness. Relevant research studies, organized according to focus and methodology, are discussed and then summarized in a table. Research categories include school effectiveness studies, reanalysis of large data-sets, survey and case study research, alternative schools research, and district-sponsored studies of local discipline programs. No single strategy is universally effective. A future agenda raises several issues regarding research validity, effective organizational strategy, and the impact of school discipline plans. (35 references) (MLH)

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School Organization, Leadership, and Student Behavior[1]

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School Organization, Leadership, and
Student Behavior

A perennial concern for educators, student behavior has been examined and addressed from a variety of perspectives. Some have dealt with behavior problems clinically, investigating the origins of dysfunctional student conduct and developing highly personalized treatments. Some have adopted instructional approaches in which students are taught how to behave appropriately and teachers are encouraged to regard good instructional practices as the first line of defense against misconduct. Some have sought to control student behavior through cooperative action involving school authorities, parents, community agencies, government programs, juvenile justice offices, and the like. Some have invested energy in providing leadership and organizational structures to reduce the likelihood of inappropriate student behavior. This paper takes an in-depth look at the last set of approaches, which henceforth will be referred to as organizational approaches to student behavior.

The paper opens with a brief description of the key elements of organizational structure and leadership. Next comes an overview of general strategies for dealing with student behavior "organizationally." A model of organizational influences on student behavior is proposed as a basis for understanding recent research. The major portion of the paper involves a review of recent studies in which school organization and leadership have been related to student behavior. This research

is grouped into school effectiveness studies, re-analyses of large data sets, survey and case study research, studies of alternative schools and programs, and district-sponsored research. The conclusion identifies key organizational variables associated with orderly student behavior and suggests productive courses of action for practitioners and researchers.

Key Elements of Schools as Organizations

All organizations consist of certain structures and functions designed to deal with the twin challenges of external adaptation and internal integration (Schein, 1985). Organizational survival depends on how well these two challenges are handled. Schools, for example, are unlikely to survive if they consistently are unable to control inappropriate student behavior and produce desired student outcomes. Communities will not tolerate disorderly schools. Outside pressure will be matched by internal demands for order.

Leadership is one of the most visible manifestations of any organization. Leadership has been linked to the meaning people find in collective action. (Duke, 1986). If students find their school experience meaningful, it is likely attributable in large part to strong leadership by administrators, teachers, and peers. Leadership also has been associated with specific personality traits, competencies, and responses to predicatable situations (Duke, 1987).

Among the key responsibilites of school leadership is the articulation of organizational goals. For the purposes of this paper, one pre-eminent goal of schools is to ensure an orderly environment in which teaching and learning can occur. An additional related goal may be to cultivate responsible student behavior and good character. Since schools do not possess unlimited resources, decisions must be made concerning how best to use available personnel and materials. Goals assist in the effort to target available resources for maximum impact.

To ensure that students and staff members work toward school goals, all schools possess a control structure. The four mechanisms that typically constitute

organizational control structure include evaluation, supervision, rewards, and sanctions. A fifth function, coordination, may be considered to be closely related to control structure. Coordination refers to any organizational effort designed to reduce uncertainty, increase cooperation, and minimize competition between units of the organization. Failure to achieve school goals may be attributable, in part, to problems with one or more of these control mechanisms.

Besides control mechanisms, four additional elements of organizational structure have been linked, at least in theory, to organizational outcomes (Hage, 1965). Complexity will refer to the degree of specialization and technical expertise required to achieve school goals. Centralization concerns the hierarchy of school authority and the proportion of school members who participate in decision making. Formalization encompasses the rules and regulations designed to guide the behavior of students and staff members. Stratification involves the distribution of status and privilege within schools. It encompasses mechanisms such as student tracking and grouping.

Organizational variables like those mentioned above permit us to describe and differentiate among schools, thereby offering possible explanations for between-school variations in student behavior, achievement, and overall effectiveness. One school, for example, may be highly formalized with clear goals and strong leadership, while another may possess few rules, a vague sense of mission, and weak leadership.

Of further assistance in differentiating among schools are the constructs organizational culture and school climate (Sarason, 1971; Schein, 1985). While not structural factors per se, the culture and climate of a school embody elements of organizational structure, such as norms, expectations, and collective aspirations. School size is an important dimension of culture and climate, affecting interactions among people, opportunities for involvement, and allocation of resources. Variations in school culture and climate may help explain different patterns of student behavior.

In thinking about and describing the possible relationships between school organizationa and student behavior, several key organizational variables have been introduced. They include:

- Leadership
- Goals
- Control structure
  - Supervision
  - Evaluation
  - Rewards
  - Sanctions
  - Coordination
- Complexity
- Centralization
- Formalization
- Stratification
- School culture and climate

A Working Model of School-based Strategies

When educators think about ways to alter school organization in order to affect student behavior, they do not always use the technical language introduced in the last section. Frequently they think in terms of specific school-based strategies such as in-school suspension and discipline codes. In this section an attempt will be made to develop a model capable of classifying these strategies. Such a model, when linked to the organizational structures and functions from the preceding section, will be useful in reviewing research on school discipline.

School-based strategies for dealing with student behavior can be divided into three general categories, depending on the primary purpose of the strategy. Some strategies, for example, are designed to exert a direct influence on student behavior. These strategies can be sub-divided further, depending on whether they are intended

to encourage appropriate student behavior, discourage inappropriate student behavior, or manage (contain) student behavior so as to minimize the likelihood of major disruption. Table 1 identifies some school-based strategies representing each of these purposes. The organizational structure or function represented by each strategy also is shown.

Table 1

Strategies Directly Influencing Student Behavior

Purpose of Strategy	Sample Strategy	Organizational Structure/Function
Encourage appropriate student behavior	Student recognition programs	Control structure - rewards
Discourage inappropriate student behavior	In-school suspension	Control structure - sanctions
Manage student behavior	Referral to alternative school or program	Organizational culture; Formalization

Not all strategies are designed to affect student conduct directly. Some strategies, for instance, focus on other aspects of student experience. These indirect influences include efforts to stimulate productive student learning, thereby reducing frustration associated with low academic achievement, and to encourage student involvement in school activities, an outcome which can contribute to student self-esteem and concern for personal conduct. In both cases, the ultimate outcome is likely to be improved student behavior. Table 2 offers illustrations of some indirect strategies.

Table 2

Strategies Indirectly Influencing Student Behavior

Purpose of Strategy	Sample Strategy	Organizational Structure/Function
Stimulate productive student learning	Cooperative learning (Teams - Games - Tournaments)	Stratification
Encourage student involvement in school activities	Student participation in making school rules	Decentralization

A third set of strategies are intended to influence teacher behavior and, ultimately, student conduct. Some of these strategies aim to promote instructional effectiveness, thereby increasing the likelihood that students will find school meaningful and productive. Other strategies are intended to promote good classroom management and disciplinary practices. Table 3 presents examples of these strategies.

Table 3

Strategies Influencing Teacher Effectiveness

Purpose of Strategy	Sample Strategy	Organizational Structure/Function
Promote instructional effectiveness	Regular teacher observation and evaluation	Leadership; Control structure - supervision, evaluation
Develop good classroom management and disciplinary practice	Classroom management plans	Formalization

Taken together, the three sets of strategies presented in Tables 1, 2, and 3 constitute a comprehensive set of school-based organizational efforts to deal with student behavior. Figure 1 combines these strategies into a model of organizational approaches to student behavior. The model helps set the stage for reviewing the results of research on school discipline.

Insert Figure 1 here

Research on Leadership, School Organization, and Student Behavior

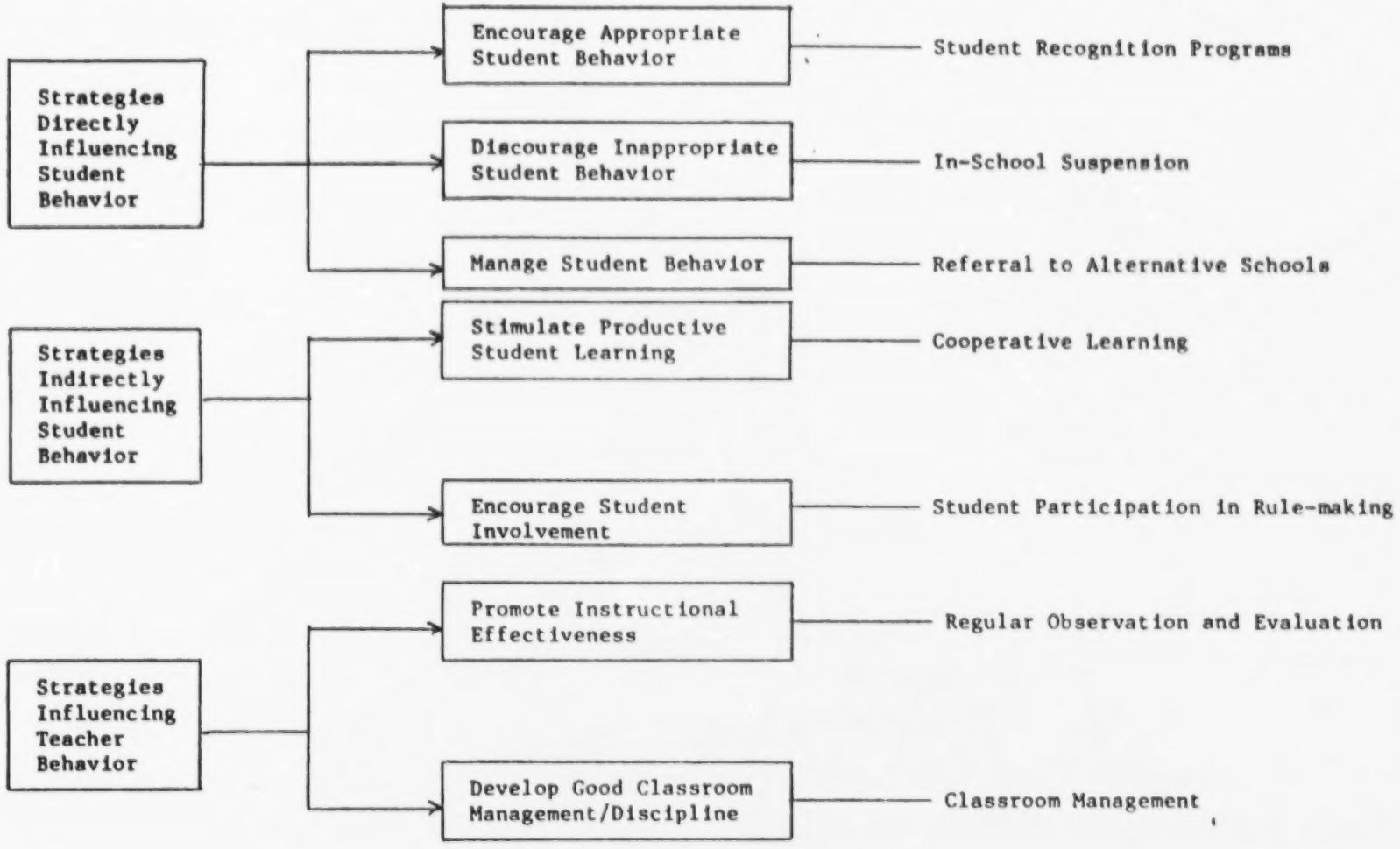
Compared to clinical and instructional approaches to student behavior, organizational approaches have not been researched extensively. The only comprehensive review of organizational research related to student behavior was conducted by the author and a colleague in 1983 (Duke and Seidman). The present paper covers research studies since 1983 along with important prior investigations. To facilitate the review, studies will be organized according to focus and methodology. Categories include school effectiveness studies, re-analysis of large data sets, survey and case study research, research on alternative schools, and district-sponsored evaluation studies of local discipline programs.

School Effectiveness Studies

Undertaken to challenge the conventional wisdom that schools explain very little of the variation in student achievement, the so-called school effectiveness studies compared the characteristics of schools with relatively high and relatively

Figure 1

Model for School-based Strategies for Handling Student Behavior



low levels of student achievement. The schools tended to be urban elementary schools serving large numbers of disadvantaged students. In the wake of these studies came prescriptive syntheses, cautionary reviews, and documented efforts to implement school effectiveness findings.

School effectiveness research is pertinent to the concerns of this paper because an orderly environment has emerged from syntheses of findings as a consistent characteristic of schools with relatively high levels of student achievement (Duke, 1982; Stedman, 1985). Furthermore, many other factors associated with high student achievement represent aspects of school organization, thereby raising the possibility that orderly environment and school organization are closely related. Of these school effectiveness characteristics, school leadership appears to be one of the most influential. In their ten-year longitudinal study of thirty schools, for example, Austin and Holowenzok (1985) found leadership by the principal or some other individual (such as a reading specialist) to be consistently associated with student achievement. Leadership for these researchers, entailed high expectations for students, constant monitoring of classroom activity and student performance, and recruitment of talented staff members. Additional leadership functions identified in other school effectiveness studies include staff development, instructional support, and resource acquisition (Duke, 1987).

Besides strong instructional leadership, effective schools tend to be characterized by such organizational factors as frequent and systematic evaluation of students, goals linked to the acquisition of basic skills, and clear rules for student conduct (Stedman, 1985). The cultures of effective schools encompass norms of collegiality among staff members and pervasive caring for students (Anderson, 1985). Student stratification is minimized as a result of efforts to utilize fluid ability grouping strategies (Stedman, 1985).

Syntheses of findings from school effectiveness research invariably have led to prescriptions for practitioners. These prescriptions consist of a variety of

strategies, suggesting that improving schools is not a simple matter of one or two changes. Hundreds of school districts in the mid-eighties have rushed to implement school effectiveness recommendations, prompting a second wave of research and research reviews. The reviews have been much more cautionary in tone than the initial prescriptive syntheses. Questions have been raised about the extent to which generalizations concerning school improvement can be made from studies of urban elementary schools. Cuban (1983) warned that the criteria for determining whether schools are effective - namely student performance on standardized tests of basic skills - were too narrow. Stedman (1985) noted that researchers did not use systematic procedures to observe schools, but relied on the impressions of observers who knew, in advance, which schools were effective and ineffective.

Despite the warning, school administrators saw in the school effectiveness findings practical guidelines for school improvement. While researchers might debate the quality of data, educators still had to make daily decisions about the operation of schools. The latter could not afford to wait for the perfect school effectiveness study to be conducted. Local school effectiveness projects therefore continued to proliferate followed by studies of implementation efforts. In one of the most detailed investigations, Purkey (1984) examined one urban district's efforts to incorporate thirteen elements of effective schools research in six high schools. For present purposes, what is intriguing about Purkey's research is not that the project failed, but that attention tended to be focused primarily on student discipline, building security, and attendance. School improvement goals concerning academic achievement, student recognition, and the like failed to command the time and energy of school personnel. Purkey attributed this unofficial narrowing of project goals to inadequate district policies and the naive belief that resolving discipline-related concerns alone would produce student achievement gains.

One study with more encouraging findings involved efforts to implement school effectiveness strategies in two troubled Baltimore (MD) junior high schools (Denise Gottfredson, 1986 b). With the cooperation of Johns Hopkins researchers, school teams consisting of teachers, administrators, and support staff were formed. Teams analyzed school problems and planned school improvement interventions, including staff training in behavior management and cooperative learning techniques. Eventually, the two Effective Schools Projects came to encompass a variety of organizational strategies, including curriculum development (addition of a career exploration program), parental awareness and involvement, community support, and utilization of specialists.

One Effective Schools Project was successful and led to decreased school disorder, enhanced school climate, and increased social development and perceived relevance of school. A study of the school improvement process suggests that the introduction of new classroom management and instructional strategies may require supporting organizational development, including systematic training for supervisors as well as teachers and a commitment by school officials to minimize staff turnover. The failure of the second Effective Schools Project was attributed, in part, to a change in school leadership mid-way through the intervention and the subsequent unwillingness of staff members to regard the project as more than a pilot effort.

A similarly comprehensive intervention, also under the auspices of the Center for Social Organization of Schools, took place over a three-year period in Charleston County (SC) public schools (D. Gottfredson, 1986 a). Aimed at reducing delinquency and increasing student attachement to school, Project PATHE ("Positive Action Through Holistic Education") consisted of organizational innovations (planning and trouble-shooting teams, policy revision, curriculum development, staff development), instructional innovations, career exploration activities, and special student services.

Since it was impossible to create a true control group, it is not known whether changes identified by researchers were attributable to Project PATHE. The study does indicate, however, that disruption decreased and student attachement to school

increased in project schools. Particular schools reported fewer suspensions, greater belief in school rules, decreased victimization, and less drug involvement. What the Charleston County and Baltimore studies seem to suggest is that the creation of more orderly and productive learning environments is a function of comprehensive school improvement rather than isolated innovations. Since student behavior is the result of numerous factors and conditions, no single strategy is likely to produce widespread changes in school climate.

Re-analyses

The availability of several large data bases has provided rich opportunities for researchers interested in student behavior and school organization.

In 1976 McPartland and McDill reanalyzed data collected a decade earlier from 900 principals by James Coleman and his associates. They found that school size was positively correlated to reports of the extent and seriousness of student misconduct. While the relationship was small in terms of the total variance explained, it was statistically significant. Further, the re-analysis controlled for student ability level, racial composition, and socioeconomic status. The researchers concluded that "all behavior is more visible in smaller schools and naturally subject to greater control" (p. 19).

A second finding related to school organization concerned student involvement in school decision making. A measurable positive impact on attitudes opposing violence and vandalism was found in schools where students played a role in deciding such things as school rules. This finding is supported by studies of alternative schools, where student involvement tends to be extensive. Research on alternative schools will be discussed later in this report.

The Safe School Study, commissioned by Congress and conducted by the National Institute of Education, has proved to be one of the most fertile grounds for re-analysis. It consisted of three components: 1) a mail survey of principals in

several thousand public elementary and secondary schools, 2) an intensive study of 642 public junior and senior high schools in which thousands of students and teachers completed questionnaires, and 3) case studies of ten schools (National Institute of Education, 1978).

Wu, Pink, Crain, and Moles (1982) used Safe School Study data to look at the relationship between suspensions and the way schools organize and operate disciplinary acitivites (control structure). They recognized the fact that schools differ in the degree to which discretionary authority is delegated to teachers in disciplinary matters. Using teacher responses from the Safe School Study, the researchers found that a high rate of suspension was positively correlated with a high degree of perceived administrative centralization of discipline. They went on to indicate that a high rate of suspension was not a desirable outcome or an indication of effective control structure.

To demonstrate the undesirability of a high suspension rate, the researchers constructed a Good Governance Scale made up primarily of student perceptions of school disciplinary practices. Well-governed schools were schools that did not suspend frequently. Students in these schools perceived their principals to be firm and fair. High suspension rates appeared to be indications that less severe control mechanisms had failed.

The Gottfredsons (1979; 1985) re-analyzed part of the Safe School data and found that student victimizations in 600 schools were related to 1) teacher confusion over how school policies were determined (coordination) and 2) the fairness and clarity of school rules as perceived by students. Lower levels of victimization were associated with effective communications, both between administrators and teachers and between teachers and students. The Gottfredsons challenged a finding of McPartland and McDill (1976) when they reported that teacher preference for student involvement in school decision making was related to larger numbers of reported victimizations.

A major objective of the Gottfredsons' work was to identify organizational characteristics that help explain differences among schools in amounts of personal (teacher and student) victimization, disorder, and disruption. Correlation coefficients and multiple correlation were used to examine the relationship of criterion measures to predictors of discipline problems. Characteristics found to be correlated with some form of discipline problem included school size, coordination, teacher resources, leadership, and formalization. The Gottfredsons recommended the following organizational strategies for reducing discipline problems:

- Create schools of smaller size, where "teachers have extensive responsibility for and contact with a limited number of students" and "where steps are taken to ensure adequate resources for instruction" (p. 171).
- Consider breaking down large schools into smaller components, such as schools-within-schools (p.172).
- Encourage a high degree of cooperation between teachers and administrators (p. 173).
- Clarify rules, consequences for breaking rules, and disciplinary policies so that confusion is minimized (p. 173).
- Encourage school leadership that is firm and visible (p. 173).

A third target for re-analysis has been the High School and Beyond Study (Peng, et.al., 1981). Data were gathered from 30,000 sophomores in 1980, with a follow-up questionnaire having been administered in 1982. Initial data analysis yielded the most accurate profile of the American high school student ever produced.

Several re-analyses of the High School and Beyond Study have focused on school dropouts. Since dropping out and discipline problems are often related, these re-analyses are pertinent to the present report. Prior to leaving school, dropouts frequently become frustrated and resentful, thereby contributing to school disorder. The organizational conditions that contribute to early school departure also may

influence uproductive student behavior in school. Wehlage and Rutter (1986), for example, found that "marginal students' from the High School and Beyond Study tended to perceive the effectiveness of school discipline as relatively poor. Students were even more negative about the fairness of discipline. In addition, they felt that teachers were not particularly interested in them. Natriello, Pallas, and McDill (1986) concluded from the data that smaller schools were more likely to be responsive to the needs of "marginal students." One clear message from these and other studies has been that organizational strategies for reducing the number of school dropouts also are likely to foster a climate more conducive to productive student behavior. Little support can be found for strategies that would reduce school size by making life uncomfortable for certain groups of students.

Survey and Case Study Research

While the capacity for generalization from large data bases cannot be matched by small-scale surveys and case studies, the latter often produce valuable insights into the relationships between organizational characteristics and student behavior.

Hollingsworth, Lufler, and Clune (1984) utilized an interdisciplinary approach to examine discipline in five public secondary schools in a mid-size Wisconsin city during the 1977-78 school year. Methods used to collect data included extensive non-participant observation, interviewing, surveys, and document review. Data analysis was focused on describing how control structure was linked to other elements of school organization. No systematic effort was made to draw causal inferences.

The researchers found little consensus regarding the desired goals and practices of school discipline. Enforcement of rules was "very decentralized," with teachers differing widely in perceptions of misbehavior, orientations toward punishment, and desire to be involved in discipline. Students and teachers alike believed that high achieving students were favored when disciplinary issues arose. The sanctions used by school personnel were not imposed systematically nor did they appear to be very effective. On the other hand, the researchers noted that variations in classroom management among teachers did not create problems. Little

justification for uniform classroom management practices could be found.

Cheryl Perry (1980) conducted interviews and administered questionnaires in twelve California high schools in order to identify organizational and community-based correlates of student behavior problems. Student behavior problems were defined in terms of attendance, disciplinary referrals, and perceptions of the principal. Schools were divided into those with relatively few and those with relatively many behavior problems. High degrees of absenteeism were correlated with the existence of a school-sanctioned smoking area, programs to deal with drug use, and student uncertainty about consequences for rule-breaking.- The number of disciplinary referrals was positively correlated with the percentage of students in vocational education (stratification), the existence of a school-sanctioned smoking area, consistent rule enforcement by administrators, and student uncertainty about consequences for rule-breaking. Principal judgment of behavior problems was positively correlated with the existence of a school-sanctioned smoking area, consistent rule enforcement by administrators, and the percentage of teachers who decide classroom rules.

It is difficult to separate cause and effect in Perry's research. For example, did school-sanctioned smoking areas contribute to behavior problems by providing opportunities for students to congregate under poorly supervised conditions or did smoking areas result from administrative acknowledgment that smoking by students could not be prevented? Still, Perry's research is noteworthy because it raises the possibility that consistent rule enforcement and teacher firmness, under certain conditions, actually may contribute to student behavior problems.

Whereas Perry spent a relatively brief time gathering data in twelve schools, Metz (1978) took over a year to conduct a field study of two desegregated junior high schools. She sought to understand the ways that schools as organizations addressed the "twin tasks of pursuing education and maintaining civility, safety, and order" (p. IX). Because students in the two schools behaved quite differently, despite being matched racially and socioeconomically, Metz was able to make some

causal inferences. She identified differences in faculty culture and leadership as prime contributors to differences in behavior at the two schools.

At Hamilton, the school with a higher level of disorder, there was no commonly accepted set of behavioral norms and expectations among faculty members. Teachers disagreed on almost everything, from how to approach children to goals for disciplinary practices. The faculty at Chauncey, the less troubled junior high, shared a common understanding of school discipline. They expected to have to work to maintain order, and they did not waste time finding people to blame for behavior problems. Students at Hamilton quickly perceived that misconduct would not be dealt with consistently, while their counterparts at Chauncey confronted teacher unanimity about how disobedience would be handled.

Metz also discovered differences in leadership which she felt helped to account for differences in student behavior. Hamilton's principal opted to delegate responsibility for discipline to his teachers, thereby ensuring that faculty fragmentation would continue. Chauncey's principal, on the other hand, insisted that a common conception of order and safety be accepted by all teachers as well as all students. Interestingly, the latter's success in maintaining order was not matched by success in winning over alientated students. Despite the discipline problems at Hamilton, some students became committed to the school and its goal of academic accomplishment.

Metz's study is important because it indicated that classroom management should not be considered apart from school discipline. What happens in the corridors has a direct effect on behavior in classrooms. A similar point had been made earlier by Cusick (1973), in a participant-observer study of student culture in a high school. Cusick also found that the overarching commitment to order by administrators and teachers seemed to interfere with efforts to achieve academic goals and respond to student concerns.

A decade later Cusick (1983) conducted case studies of three integrated high schools - two urban and one suburban. His basic finding was that the organiza-

tional structure of secondary schools accounted for much of the general pattern of student behavior. The key element of school structure was a commitment to the goal of equal opportunity - or what Cusick termed the "egalitarian ideal." Were it not for this commitment, Cusick maintained that unruly and unmotivated students, thereby reducing the need for a pervasive control structure. To have abandoned the egalitarian ideal, however, would be to threaten the very legitimacy of public schooling as an institution. The character of American high schools is shaped, Cusick argued, by the fact they must make every effort to serve the needs of the disadvantaged and the uncooperative. As a result, such organizational functions as teacher evaluation, scheduling, and student activities come to be dominated by a concern for order. This concern is elevated to the level of obsession when racial tension among students is a possibility.

Crawford, Miskel, and Johnson (1980) and Duke and Meckel (1980) also conducted studies of racially mixed urban secondary schools, but their concerns differed from Cusick's. The former tried to account for the success of a school improvement project, while the latter investigated factors contributing to the persistent failure of school discipline strategies.

Faced with high rates of withdrawal, suspension, and academic failure among black students, a first-year high school principal worked with university researchers to develop an intervention program (Crawford, Miskel, and Johnson, 1980). The program consisted of various organizational strategies, including faculty agreement on a set of basic school goals, peer counseling, an independent study center, career education opportunities, and development of a leadership cadre. Data on implementation efforts and outcomes were collected over a three-year period. Data analyses revealed that the rate of minority withdrawals, suspensions, and failures decreased following the intervention.

While the researchers were reluctant to generalize from a single case, they were prompted to speculate on the key role of leadership in the project's success. Besides ensuring that school goals were always on the faculty's agenda, the principal

coordinated the collection and analysis of survey data from students and dealt with unanticipated problems which threatened the intervention. An additional factor in the project's success was the training received by staff members. As a result of extensive staff development effort, teachers were able to deal with the increased complexity occasioned by new responsibilities (for example, student advisement and career counseling).

Duke and Meckel (1980) addressed a somewhat different concern. While involved in a large school improvement project, they noted that various efforts by school authorities to deal with truancy, class-cutting, and other attendance problems failed to have a lasting impact. Over the course of one school year they gathered data in a high school and a junior high school, noting the effects on absenteeism of such strategies as a new detention room, an independent study program for chronic truants, use of plainclothes police personnel, and a mid-year amnesty arrangement. As each new strategy was tried, absenteeism would decline for a brief period of time and then return to previous levels or higher.

In their attempt to explain the apparent failure of these strategies, the researchers identified several organizational factors. One problem was increased complexity, as represented by the proliferation of special roles associated with school discipline. Coordination became more difficult as the task of handling student attendance was spread among attendance clerks, school administrators, special security personnel, counselors, community liaisons, and detention supervisors. A second problem involved over-reliance on sanctions to produce improved attendance. School personnel failed to recognize the benefits of more positive strategies, such as increased student involvement and rewards for good attendance. Some of the sanctions upon which they relied - such as suspension - hardly seemed appropriate for students whose problem was truancy. A third obstacle concerned how attendance policies were developed. Rarely were students and teachers consulted by school administrators prior to introducing a new policy. In many cases,

new policies were unknown to large numbers of each group. In other cases, policies were regarded as meaningless or misguided.

In an effort to understand the school factors affecting rates of suspension, Bickel and Qualls (1980) selected four high-suspension and four low-suspension secondary schools in the Jefferson County (Kentucky) School District. Classroom observations were conducted, and questionnaires were administered to students and staff members. Data analyses indicated that several organizational factors discriminated between the low- and high-suspension schools. Regarding leadership, administrators in low-suspension schools were more visible in and around the school. Their presence had a positive impact on staff morale and student behavior. Leadership contributed to differences in climate between the two sets of schools. Low-suspension schools appeared to be more positive environments, characterized by greater concern for human relations and mutual respect between faculty and students. The study is flawed, however, by the fact that observers knew that the schools differed in suspension rates before observational data were collected.

Fiqueira-McDonough (1986) conducted case studies of two high schools in the same community in order to understand the relationship between school characteristics, discipline problems, and gender. Self-report data were obtained from a random sample of tenth graders at nine schools. From this set, a subsample of 350 students attending two suburban high schools was selected. Both schools were characterized by a high degree of academic success, a low dropout rate, and similar expenditures per student. The two schools differed markedly, however, in the frequency of minor disciplinary offenses.

In trying to account for this difference, the researcher noted that the less troubled school was characterized by greater student attachment to the school. The more troubled school was described as a more competitive environment, with academic achievement - as measured by grades - serving as the paramount goal. The singular focus on a narrow notion of academic success ensured that the

experiences of many students would be unsatisfactory, a consequence that could have contributed directly to misbehavior. The less troubled school, with its more diverse opportunities for success and greater regard for the nonacademics and vocational interests of students, provided a setting in which a larger proportion of students could feel that their needs were accommodated.

Research on Alternatives

The studies referred to so far have focused on conventional public schools. Since the mid-sixties, however, alternative schools have been available in many locations for students unable to function effectively in conventional settings. Alternative schools vary widely in purpose, make-up, structure, and curriculum, but they share a common desire for an identity separate from conventional public schools. A small body of research on these alternatives exists and provides an opportunity to examine the impact on student behavior of different organizational structures.

In 1977-1978, Duke and Perry (1978) sought to determine whether student behavior was as great a problem in a sample of eighteen California alternative high schools as it was reported to be in neighboring regular high schools. On-site observations and interviews with students and teachers revealed that student behavior was rarely a major concern in alternative schools. This finding came as a surprise, since many students in these alternatives had been forced to leave regular schools because of discipline problems. The researchers identified a variety of possible explanations for the general orderliness of the alternatives.

The small size (average enrollment was 111 students) of the alternatives was one factor. With fewer teachers, students were less likely to confront conflicting expectations. Smallness also meant teachers more easily could recognize and interact with a larger percentage of students. Another factor was the absence of stratification among students. With fewer students, it was less easy for cliques and in-groups to develop. Classes were not organized into homogeneous groups nor were there separate "tracks". Additional factors included a low degree of formalization (few rules and procedures), substantial student involvement in school

decision making, emphasis on consequences rather than punishment, and ample opportunities for conflict resolution. Students indicated that they appreciated being treated like adults.

Gold and Mann (1984) investigated three alternative high schools to determine how effectively they dealt with delinquent and disruptive students. Students attending the alternatives were compared to students at the conventional schools from which the former group had come. While the behavior of both groups improved over the course of the study, the researchers concluded that the alternative schools were more effective in utilizing social-psychological processes to reduce discipline problems. The alternatives tended to have the greatest positive impact on students who were neither overly anxious nor depressed.

In trying to account for the success of the alternatives, Gold and Mann noted that students praised the flexibility of these schools. Teachers in the alternatives were perceived to take account of the fears, moods, and needs of individual students. This finding supports a relatively low degree of formalization, since an abundance of rules and procedures tends to limit the capacity of teachers to respond to individual differences.

The principals in the three alternative schools refrained from playing the role of disciplinarian. Leadership that symbolizes firmness and order may work with most students, but those who are referred to alternatives often have experienced difficulty dealing with authority. For them, principals with a non-confrontative style may be more effective.

A problem with most studies of alternatives is the lack of a control group. Because the New Haven alternative school studied by Trickett, McConahay, Phillips, and Ginter (1985) had more student applicants than openings, a control group could be constituted from the non-admitted applicants who remained in conventional high schools. Modeled after Philadelphia's Parkway Program, the New Haven High School in the Community offered students individualized learning experiences with experts

in the city. The school was divided into two autonomous units, each with approximately 150 students and ten staff. The per pupil cost during the two years of the study were equal to or lower than that for students in conventional New Haven high schools.

When compared to controls, alternative school students reported greater general satisfaction with school and more affection or liking between teachers and students. Controls perceived they had less influence over school policies. Students at the High School in the Community regarded persons of other races and belief systems with less prejudice than controls. Furthermore, achievement, as measured by the Sequential Tests of Educational Progress (Educational Testing Service), was comparable for both groups.

It should be noted that many of the characteristics of alternatives also can be found in elementary schools. Both are more likely than secondary schools to be small, responsive to individual differences, and unstratified. In addition, students face fewer sets of expectations, since they typically interact with fewer adults. Alternative secondary schools may be an appropriate intermediate step for students who are unprepared to make the transition from elementary schools to large, departmentalized secondary schools.

District-Sponsored Research

A final type of research related to student behavior involves evaluation studies sponsored by local school districts. Districts frequently allocate considerable resources to efforts to improve student behavior. As a consequence, they often are required to determine whether resources have been used responsibly. In order to review the results of district-sponsored research, requests were mailed to the directors of 108 district research and evaluation units.[1]

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1. This list of directors was compiled by S.D. Melville of the Educational Testing Service and shared with the author by Walter Hathaway of Portland Public Schools. Directors were asked to send any studies conducted within the last five years that examined organizational approaches to student behavior.

A total of 13 studies from 12 districts had been received by the time this report was written. Only studies in which organizational strategies or variables were evaluated were selected. Given the political environment in which district-sponsored research typically is conducted, it is likely that many evaluations tend to portray results in as positive a manner as possible. Caution should be used in interpreting these studies. Table 4 presents an overview of the district-sponsored studies.

Insert Table 4
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Studies conducted in Akron, Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Jefferson County, (Louisville, KY), Memphis, and Winston-Salem/Forsythe County dealt with several components of school control structure, including in-school suspension, Saturday school, and after-school detention. These sanctions generally were perceived to reduce behavior problems. While Atlanta and Austin also reported positive impacts on student self-control, Akron noted that student grades were perceived to improve. Winston-Salem/Forsythe County found, however, that student attitudes did not improve appreciably. Only Akron, Austin, and Baltimore analyzed actual disciplinary referrals. The other studies relied on student, teacher, and parent perceptions.

Montgomery County, Maryland, and Oklahoma City studies investigated the desirability of school discipline plans. Such plans represent a formalization of policies related to appropriate student behavior and the consequences for misconduct. Both studies supported the continued use of school discipline plans. In neither case, however, were data gathered prior to the implementation of school discipline plans or from control schools. A study by Jefferson County (KY) Public Schools found that school discipline plans for middle schools and high schools were being implemented in accordance with the district's Uniform Code of Student Conduct. Data were not systematically gathered, however, on the impact of these plans on

student behavior.

Austin and the District of Columbia evaluated special programs designed to deal with discipline-related concerns. Austin found that a residential center providing counseling and tutoring to court-adjudicated students produced modest results in terms of attendance and academic performance. The main benefit of the School-Community Guidance Center may have been to discourage "at-risk" youngsters from dropping out of school. The District of Columbia study gave high marks to its Youth Awareness Program, a multifaceted effort to provide students with information and counseling related to drugs, sexuality, and other adolescent concerns. The behavior of participants was perceived by some school personnel and parents to have improved as a result of the intervention.

Many of the letters from district directors of research and evaluation indicated that local efforts were being made to address student behavior concerns, but that studies had not yet been conducted to determine their effectiveness. Outside assistance in assessing the impact of organizational approaches to student behavior was requested. Interest in sharing the results of district-sponsored research also was expressed.

Table 4

Summary of Recent, District-Sponsored Studies of School Discipline

District	Organizational Variable	Research Methods	Findings
Akron Public Schools	Saturday detention	Review of referrals; staff questionnaires	. 5,050 student days of suspension were "saved" in 1986. Staff perceived that grades of participating students improved.
Atlanta Public Schools	After-school detention, (District-wide)	Student and staff questionnaires	. Students and staff perceive detention reduces discipline problems, decreases repeat offenses, and encourages greater self-control.
	In-school suspension (3 pilot schools)	Student and staff questionnaires	. Students and staff perceive in-school suspension reduces discipline problems, decreases repeat offenses, and encourages greater self-control.
Austin Independent School District	In-School suspension (Project ASSIST)	Review of disciplinary actions; teacher survey; principal interview	. Numbers of disciplinary actions in 3 elementary schools declined over a 4 year period; teachers perceived that students developed greater self-discipline and classroom coping skills
	School-Community Guidance Center (residential facility for adjudicated youth)	Review of referral data; follow-up data	. Use of specialists for counseling, tutoring, and monitoring of at-risk youth resulted in modest improvement in attendance and grade point average.

District	Organizational Variable	Research Methods	Findings
Baltimore (MD) County Public Schools	Time-out-Room (in-school suspension) at one high school	Review of referrals over 4 years; teacher and student questionnaires	. Suspension rate did not change appreciably, but 96% of teacers and 69% of students felt behavior improved after referral.
Jefferson County (Louisville, KY) Public Schools	Uniform Code of Student Conduct (UCSC)	Interviews of school administrators and random selection of teachers and students in 12 randomly-selected secondary schools	. Data indicated that school discipline plan conformed to the UCSC and were being implemented consistently. No data on student conduct were collected.
	In-school suspension (In-school Adjustment Program)	Teacher and student interviews; observations of in-school suspension facilities	. Most teachers felt in-school suspension contributed to improve behavior by students in general and suspende students in particular
Memphis City (TN) Schools	In-school suspension	Student, staff and parent questionnaires at 3 high schools	. 76% of parents indicated their children had been helped by in-school suspension. 55% of homeroom teache perceived student behavior improved as a result of program.
Montgomery County (MD) Public Schools	School discipline plan and discipline committee	Survey of staff at randomly selected schools	. 98% of schools report having a school discipline plan and discipline committee. School staff report having sufficient authority to maintain discipline. Effective elements of discipline plans include detention, referral to principal, parental contact, out-of-school suspension and in-school suspension.

District	Organizational Variable	Research Methods	Findings
Oklahoma City (OK) Public Schools	Discipline plans (based on Assertive Discipline)	Public hearings; Questionnaires to all district teachers, bus drivers, and administrators	. Continued use of Assertive Discipline was indicated . All schools should have a written school discipline plan . Every teacher should have a classroom management plan annually approved by the principal. . District should provide Assertive Discipline training t all new teachers, substitutes, and bus drivers.
Winston-Salem/ Forsythe County (NC) Schools	In-school suspension (classrooms for Development and Change)	Questionnaires given to students, parents, and school staff	. Student attitudes were not positively affected. Parents valued the instructional benefits of in school suspension. Staff members preferred in-school suspension. Total number of out-of-school suspensions declined.

Promising Organizational Strategies

Having reviewed a variety of studies in which efforts have been made to link school leadership and organizational characteristics to student behavior, it is now necessary to consider the relevance of this body of data for practitioners. While much of the research upon which we have drawn would not meet the most rigorous standards of good empirical investigation, it is still better in most cases than no research at all. Practitioners are required to deal with problems on a daily basis, whether or not there is high-quality data available. Suggestions for improving research on organizational approaches to student behavior will be made throughout this section.

Table 5 summarizes the major findings of the preceding studies in terms of the primary elements of school organization listed at the beginning of this report. The most important of these elements is leadership, typically represented by the building principal. Numerous studies pinpoint leadership as a key factor in maintaining an orderly school environment. In most cases, effective leadership style is characterized by vague, but meaningful terms such as "firm" and "fair." As to what effective leaders actually do on a daily basis to ensure the smooth operation of schools, the research is not very informative. Some studies note the principal's role as a leader of the faculty, clarifying disciplinary policies and enlisting staff commitment to consistent rule enforcement. One study stresses the importance of principal visibility as a deterrent to student misconduct. Another study notes the need for stable leadership to sustain staff commitment to a new program designed to reduce behavior problems. There is a great need for observational research that identifies how principals and other school leaders, including teacher and student leaders, actually contribute to orderly schools. Is their role mostly symbolic? Of what value are school leaders as models? Are the leadership needs of elementary and secondary schools different?

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Table 5

Summary of Studies of School Organization and Leadership

Organizational Variable	Study	Finding
Leadership	Wu, Pink, Crain and Moles (1982)	. Firm and fair leadership correlated with low rate of suspension.
	Various "school effectiveness" studies	. Strong instructional leadership by the principal or some other individual is associated with orderly school environment.
	D. Gottfredson (1986b)	. Stable school leadership is vital to sustaining staff commitment to school improvement.
	Metz (1978)	. Leadership is a key to faculty commitment to order and to consistent discipline
	Crawford, Miskel, and Johnson (1980)	. Leadership is a key to success of a program to reduce minority withdrawals, suspension, and failures.
	Bickel and Qualls (1980)	. Administrator visibility is associated with lower suspension rates.
	Gold and Mann (1984)	. Non-confrontative principals may be a key to dealing with students who have difficulty with authority.
Goals and Mission	Various "school effectiveness" studies	. An "academic focus" is associated with an orderly school environment.
	Cusick (1973)	. School commitment to maintenance of order interferes with academic and other goals.
	Cusick (1983)	. School commitment to equal opportunity forces schools to concentrate on maintaining order.
	Fiqueira-McDonough (1986)	. Diverse school goals that acknowledge a wide range of student academic and nonacademic needs are associated with lower frequency of discipline problems.

Organizational Variable	Study	Finding
Control structure	Wehlage and Rutter	. School discipline perceived by marginal students to be ineffective and unfair.
	Perry (1980)	. Consistent rule enforcement by administrators correlated with high degree of perceived behavior problems.
	Duke and Meckel (1980)	. Suspending students with attendance problems fails to have a positive impact. Detention also is an ineffective sanction.
	Hollingsworth, Lufler, and Clune (1984)	. Sanctions for misbehavior are not applied systematically, and they do not appear to be very effective.
	Duke and Perry (1978)	. Relatively orderly alternative schools stress consequences rather than punishment.
	Studies by Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Jefferson County, Memphis, Salem/Forsythe County	. In-school suspension and student detention can be effective sanctions and lead to reduced behavior probelms, improved salf-control, and higher grades.
Complexity	Crawford, Miskel, and Johnson (1980)	. Staff development helps school personnel deal with new roles involved in a program to assist minority students.
	Duke and Meckel (1980)	. Proliferation of disciplinary specialists increases coordination problems and reduces accountability
Centralization	Wu, Pink, Crain, and Moles (1982)	. High degree of administrative centralization of discipline correlated with high rate of suspension.
	McPartland and McDill (1976)	. Student involvement in school decision making is positively realted to attitudes opposing violence and vandalism.
	Gottfredson and Daiger (1979)	. Teacher preference for student involvement in decision making associated with higher levels of victimization.

Organizational Variable	Study	Finding
Centralization, cont.	Perry (1980)	. Teacher determination of class rules correlated with high degree of perceived behavior problems.
	Duke and Meckel (1980)	. Lack of student and teacher involvement in making attendance policies related to failure of strategies to reduce absenteeism.
	Hollingsworth, Lufler, and Clune (1984)	. Lack of uniformity in classroom management practices among teachers was not found to be a problem.
	Duke and Perry (1978)	. Relatively orderly alternative schools involve students in decision making and conflict resolution.
Formalization	Gottfredson and Daiger (1979)	. Student victimizations are related to teacher confusion over school policies and student uncertainty regarding rules.
	Perry (1980)	. Student uncertainty about consequences for rule-breaking correlated with absenteeism and disciplinary referrals.
	Duke and Perry (1978)	. Relatively orderly alternative schools have few formal rules.
	Gold and Mann (1984)	. Alternative schools are perceived by students to be more flexible and responsive to individual differences
	Studies by Montgomery County (MD) and Oklahoma City school systems	. School discipline plans are perceived to contribute to orderly schools.
Stratification	Perry (1980)	. High percentage of students in vocational education correlated with large number of disciplinary referrals.
	Duke and Perry (1978)	. Relatively orderly alternative schools have few student cliques and virtually no homogeneously grouped classes or "tracks".

Organizational Variable	Study	Finding
Culture and climate	Anderson (1985)	. Effective schools are more likely to be characterized by pervasive caring for students and collegialit among staff members.
	D. Gottfredson (1986a; 1986b)	. Improved school climate is linked to staff training in classroom management and cooperative learning, curriculum development, community support, parental involvement, and stable leadership.
	Gottfredsons (1985)	. Small school size correlated with lower rate of victimization.
	Wehlage and Rutner (1986)	. Marginal students perceive that teachers are not interested in them.
	McPartland and McDill (1976)	. School size is positively correlated to reports of serious discipline probelms.
	Metz (1978)	. Faculty culture - including expectations for students and norms for discipline - influences student behavior.
	Bickel and Qualls (1980)	. Positive school climate is associated with lower rate of suspensions.
	Duke and Perry (1978)	. Small size of alternative schools permits teachers to get to know students and minimizes likelihood of conflicting expectations.
	Trickett, et. al (1985)	. Alternative high school is associated with greater student satisfaction with school, greater Perceived influence over policies, and lower levels of prejudice.

While much remains to be learned about the role of school leaders, it is likely that they exert a direct or indirect influence on most of the organizational factors identified in this report. Nowhere is this influence more evident than the area of school goals. School leaders help determine and publicize school goals. They also are held accountable by superiors for achieving goals. The relationship between school goals and student behavior remains somewhat confusing, however. An orderly school environment has been linked to a schoolwide commitment to discipline, but several researchers have noted that discipline can become an end in itself, rather than a means to productive learning. The goal of good behavior is necessary, but not sufficient to ensure academic growth. One study pointed out that too narrow a definition of academic growth also can be counterproductive, since it limits the number of students whose needs can be well-served by the school. Overall, little agreement exists as to whether the primary goal of organizational approaches to school discipline should be to encourage appropriate student behavior, discourage inappropriate student behavior, or manage student behavior (see Figure 1).

Research on the impact of school control structure also reflects some diversity of opinion. Some researchers, having found that rules and consequences are applied inconsistently, have urged educators to become more consistent disciplinarians. One researcher has pointed out, though, that consistent discipline is associated with a high degree of perceived misconduct. Disagreement exists over the effectiveness of certain sanctions, particularly suspension. District-sponsored research tends to support the use of in-school suspension and detention.

Part of the confusion generated by conflicting findings could be cleared up if researchers agreed on a common conception of effective discipline. At present, some individuals think of effectiveness in terms of creating conditions under which students who wish to learn can do so. Others judge discipline to be effective when the behavior of those who disobey rules improves. Is the purpose of school control structure to minimize the likelihood of irresponsible behavior or to maximize the likelihood of responsible behavior? The organizational strategies required to

pursue one goal can differ markedly from those required to pursue the other.

Researchers have acknowledged in one way or another that school discipline is becoming more technical and complex. Various studies supported the need for staff development to keep educators apprised of new strategies for handling behavior problems. One study warned, however, that the spread of specialists may not be the antidote to growing complexity. More specialists mean more coordination problems. The willingness of teachers and administrators to play an active role in discipline can be undermined as the number of discipline-related support staff increases.

Numerous studies looked at the relationship of centralization to student behavior, but once again the findings were mixed. A high degree of actual or perceived behavior problems has been linked to apparently contradictory conditions: 1) centralized disciplinary decision making by school administrators, 2) teacher determination of classroom rules, 3) student involvement in decision making, and 4) lack of student and teacher involvement in decision making. Researchers have not always distinguished clearly between types of disciplinary decisions, thereby making the results of this research even less illuminating. Studies are needed of schools where students and/or teachers help determine school rules, classroom rules, consequences for misconduct, disciplinary procedures, and guilt or innocence of accused rulebreakers. Is student or teacher involvement appropriate for certain types of decisions but not others? What is the impact of parental involvement in disciplinary decision making?

Research on formalization has supported the conclusion that student and teacher uncertainty regarding rules and policies contributes to behavior problems. There is some evidence in district-sponsored studies to suggest that school discipline plans and classroom management plans help eliminate uncertainty. The experience of alternative schools, however, indicates that long lists of rules and elaborate disciplinary procedures may not be necessary to maintain order, at least in settings where teacher-student relations are open and positive,

The relationship between student stratification and behavior has yet to be investigated systematically. One study found that disciplinary referrals were positively related to the percentage of students in vocational tracks. A study of alternative schools with relatively minor behavior problems revealed an absence of student cliques and homogeneous grouping. Research is needed that compares student behavior in conventional schools characterized by relatively high and relatively low degrees of homogeneous grouping. How do the same students behave when they attend homogeneously-grouped and heterogeneously-grouped classes?

Though difficult to define, school culture and climate have been identified by various studies as key factors in the maintenance of order. Among the important aspects of culture and climate noted in these studies are pervasive caring for students and staff collegiality. Several studies have singled out school size, pointing out that smaller schools are less likely to have major behavior problems.

The picture that emerges from the research on school organization and student behavior is less a well-defined profile than a vague sketch. In part, this is due to the fact that, until recently, relatively few researchers trained in organization theory have investigated school discipline. What we do know about the organization of orderly schools is that it is characterized by leaders who expect orderliness and who devote time and energy to clarifying behavioral expectations for students and staff. Rules, sanctions, and procedures are discussed, debated, and frequently formalized into school discipline and classroom management plans. To balance this emphasis on formal procedures, the climate in these schools conveys concern for students as individuals. This concern may manifest itself in a variety of ways, including efforts to involve students in school decision making, school goals that recognize multiple forms of student achievement, and de-emphasis of homogeneous grouping.

Overall the research to date transmits one message unambiguously - orderly schools require more than rules and punishments. Determining the exact configuration of organizational and other factors most likely to foster appropriate student behavior is a matter that remains to be determined. It is likely that school organization and leadership will vary depending on such factors as level (elementary or secondary), locale, and student body make-up. Clearly, no single strategy is capable of producing safe, orderly, productive environments for all schools or even for any particular school.

A Research Agenda for the Future

Predictably, the research reviewed in this report raises as many questions as it answers. Three questions in particular seem to merit the attention of investigators in the coming years, and they involve the validity of studies of effective schools, variations in criteria for judging effectiveness, and the impact of school discipline plans.

First, how valid are studies of schools reputed to have few discipline problems? Much of the research from which organizational correlates of effective discipline have been derived has involved the collection of data from schools already known to be orderly or disorderly. In other words, researchers first determined which schools had high and low levels of behavior problems and <u>then</u> they sought data differentiating the two. It is possible, therefore, that researchers were predisposed to find organizational problems in the disorderly schools and indications of effective organization in the orderly schools. A more valid way to proceed might be to identify a group of schools with a range of reported behavior problems, but not to provide specific disciplinary data to those conducting the descriptive field research.

A second question concerns the lack of consensus about what constitutes an effective organizational strategy. In some studies, effectiveness is measured in terms of staff perceptions of orderliness and appropriate student behavior. Other studies utilize student and parent perceptions. Still others examine changes in disciplinary referrals, suspension rates, absenteeism, and the like. Some studies focus on the extent to which strategies correct misconduct among troubled students. Other studies base judgments of effectiveness on the extent to which troubled students are prevented from disrupting the learning of others. Most researchers consider low rates of suspension, detention, disciplinary referral, and absenteeism to be desirable. They fail to note, however, that these low rates could be due to inadequate enforcement of disciplinary procedures as well as improved student behavior.

A third issue involves the impact of school discipline plans. With an estimated three out of four public schools possessing some form of school discipline plan (Safer, 1982), the time has come to assess their contribution to school order. Most research on school discipline has focused on the effect of one new strategy. Rarely have efforts been made to determine the effect of comprehensive change - the kind that may be occasioned by implementation of a school discipline plan. To what extent do school discipline plans vary within and among school districts? To what extent are school discipline plans actually implemented? Can between-school differences in discipline plans be linked to differences in student behavior patterns?

A final suggestion is prompted by the number of district-sponsored studies received from the forementioned solicitation. Since larger school districts apparently are involved or interested in studying the effects of organizational approaches to discipline, and since district-sponsored studies are rarely published, it may be important to create a national clearing house for such research. The clearing house could publish periodic research synthses, respond to district requests for data to guide in policy making, and provide technical assistance to local researchers.

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